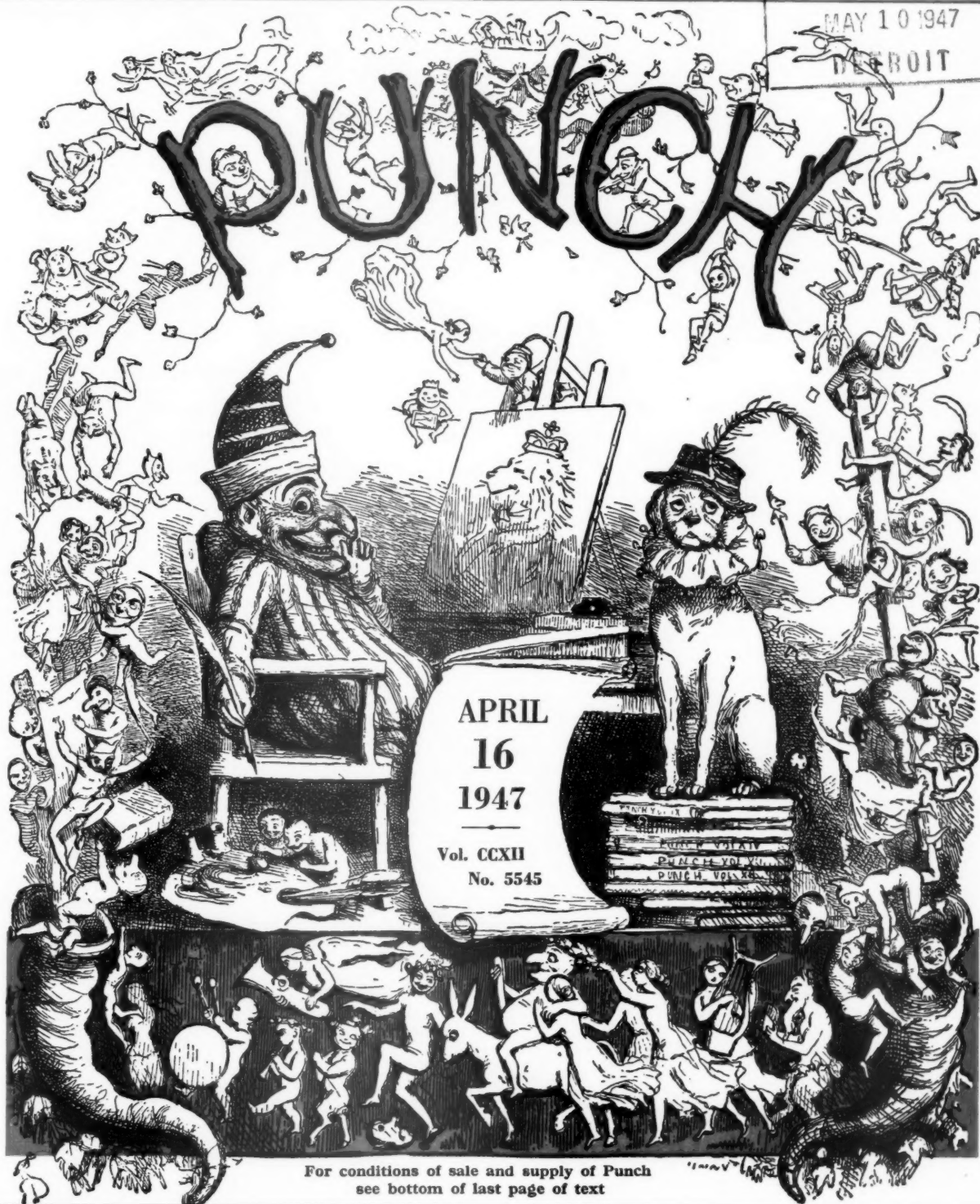


Huntley & Palmers *the first name you think of in* Biscuits

MAY 10 1947

DETROIT



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text



Player's Please

MORE AND MORE

look for the loveliest . . .



Always look for the name

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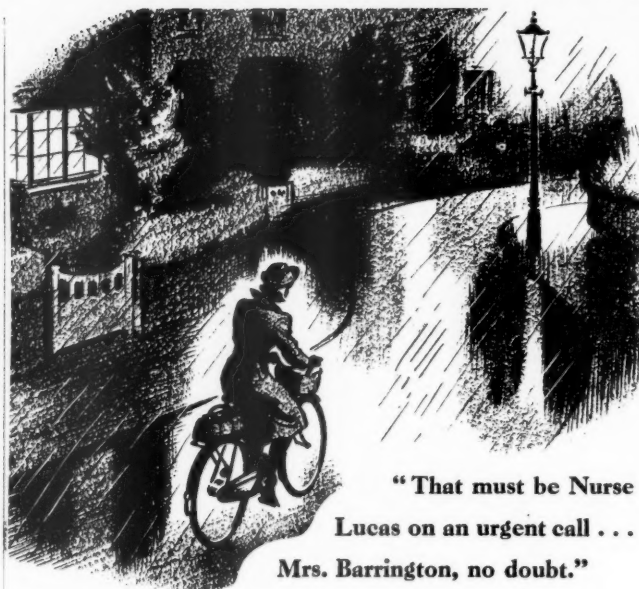


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Brylcreem your hair. It is the perfect hair tonic. Brylcreem contains no injurious ingredients—it grooms without gumming. Its pure oils and tonic ingredients massaged into the scalp will keep your hair lustrous and strong and prevent "Tight" Scalp and "Dry" Hair from choking the roots. Ask for Brylcreem—the choice of most men who take a pride in their appearance.



"That must be Nurse
Lucas on an urgent call . . .

Mrs. Barrington, no doubt."

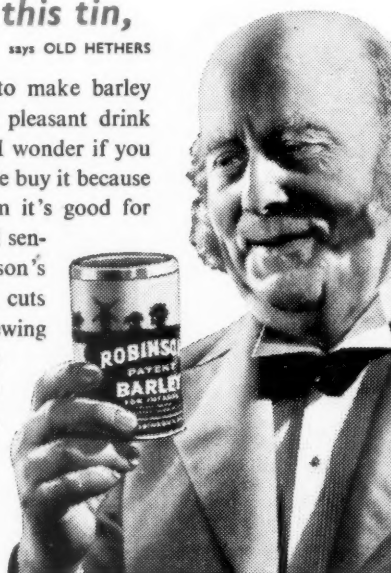
In her bag Nurse Lucas—like almost every other District Nurse and Midwife in Great Britain—carries a bottle of 'Dettol'. The fight against septic infection is incessant, and at no time more relentless than during and after childbirth. And Nurse knows that in great Maternity Hospitals **DETTOL** is the chosen weapon of defence.

RECKITT & COLMAN LTD. HULL AND LONDON

Now look at this tin,

says OLD HETHERS

You buy it, madam, to make barley water as a refreshing pleasant drink for your family. But I wonder if you know how many people buy it because their doctors tell them it's good for them? Well, you're all sensible to choose Robinson's 'Patent' Barley for it cuts out all the tedious stewing and straining, and you know it's clean for it's packed in sealed tins. Like you, madam, I look forward to the day when they put it up in bottles again.



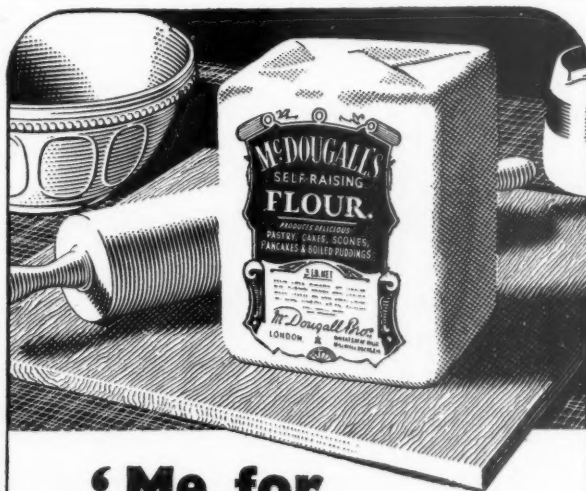
Barley Water from
ROBINSON'S
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THAT'S
WHAT I
CALL A
LOVELY
FIGURE

... (and only she knows

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'Me for
McDougall's
SELF-RAISING FLOUR

★ Miss Janet Johnston,
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gladly advises on your cooking
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THE SUREST**

BY APPOINTMENT TO HIS
MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI



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Beauty Secret . . .

The majority of women have the mistaken idea that if you brush a permanent or natural wave it is likely to straighten it and spoil the "set". Leading hairdressers in England and U.S. know that the more you brush a permanent or natural wave the longer it will last and the more it improves the hair and gives a glossy finish to the "set".

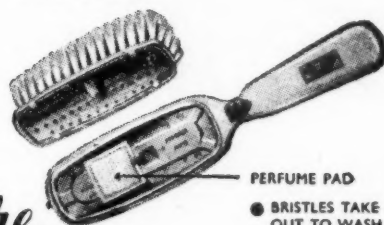
The best brush for this purpose is . . .



★ Miss Franks Whitten —
London's most photographed
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says: "I find the Kent-Cosby
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proves the beauty of the hair
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COSBY**



"Allure"
PERFUME HAIRBRUSH

*Brushes beauty and fragrance
into your hair!*

PERFUME PAD

- BRISTLES TAKE
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One of the tasks of the Y.M.C.A. is to serve young men in these circumstances. It offers friendship and encouragement, as well as recreative activities, for body, mind and spirit. Your son may be one of the many thousands who look to the Y.M.C.A. for help and guidance. By supporting this great undertaking now, you can do something to ensure that he does not look in vain. Please send a contribution to-day.



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Is
RELIEVED . . .**

—1—

**Now He Enjoys
A Good Meal**

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I wish to express my thanks to Macleans. I returned from Africa after spending almost five years in Somaliland and Kenya to find that after a few days in England I suffered with Indigestion: but after taking your Maclean Powder I have been completely relieved of it and can enjoy a good meal. I shall never be without it in the house.

Yours sincerely (Signed), F. E.

This constant volume of praise for Maclean Brand Stomach Powder is convincing evidence of its efficacy in relieving Heartburn, Flatulence, Nausea and Stomach Pains due to Indigestion.

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"ALEX C. MACLEAN."

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FOR COLDS

Vapex quickly and safely relieves the discomfort and danger of a cold in the head. Breathe the vapour from your handkerchief or pillow.

Use Vapex too as a protection from the colds of others. The antiseptic vapour is a simple, pleasant precaution against the spread of infection.

From your Chemist 2/3

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BEFORE-SHAVE
LATHERING—IT'S
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SORENESS. GIVES ME
A SMOOTHER SHAVE
AND SMOOTHER
SKIN THAN ANY
OTHER CREAM

Esquire
BRUSHLESS SHAVE
1/9

A PRODUCT OF THE J. B. WILLIAMS COMPANY



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What do you look for in a shoe? If you look first for the MOCCASIN trademark, you will find the other things you want; good looks, good leather, good workmanship. It saves a lot of shoe-leather to make straight for the shops that display the Indian's head!

26

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BLACK SOLUTION

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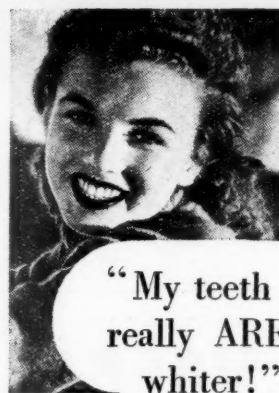
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It's the Irium in
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Down in the heart of 'Glorious Devon'
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"The BIRO ball-pointed pen is fully protected by a number of patents granted or pending, throughout the world. The patentees will take all necessary steps to enforce these patent rights and to obtain an injunction and recover damages against both manufacturers and distributors in respect of any infringing pen."

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CIGARETTE

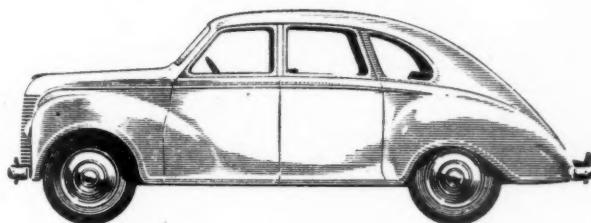


The filter tip that prevents any bits of tobacco entering the mouth is the extra refinement that adds to the enjoyment of smoking.

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ALL STEEL

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The new 1½ litre Javelin has the distinction of being the first 1947 British car of wholly new design fully tooled for all-steel quantity production. It will be ready shortly for world-wide distribution. The British car for which people here and overseas have been waiting. Price and full specification will be announced in May.

You're going to like the **JOWETT**
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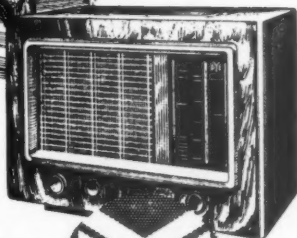
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Tradition and enterprise. Imbued with the tradition of scientific research for which Cambridge is famous, the Pye laboratories have achieved notable improvements in radio design.

The results are to be enjoyed in the performance of our A.C., DC/AC and Battery receivers, all of which have been acclaimed for their "Fidelity" reproduction and such features as the Pye "Tone-master" and easy "Flywheel" tuning control.



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Try **MACKESON'S** *Stout*
You'll like it better!



BACK THEY COME



ONE BY ONE



The '57 Varieties' are returning one by one. Like swallows on the skyline this means better times ahead. The winter of wartime scarcity is passing. The spring of peacetime plenty, goodness and flavour is now at hand.

HEINZ 57 VARIETIES

Johnson



— or Live



YOU CAN HEAR whichever you like with equal realism on a Ferranti receiver. The roll and rumble of Dr. Johnson's prose — or the tearing ecstasy of a trumpet-break — with nothing lost and nothing added.

And you can *depend* on your set to last and last without trouble or tinkering. But, as even the best of sets may falter one day, remember we appoint only the best dealers to be Ferranti dealers — men who provide real service.

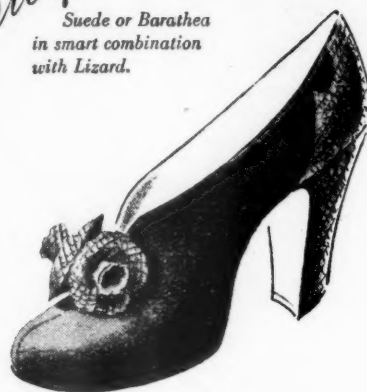
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Suede or Baratheia
in smart combination
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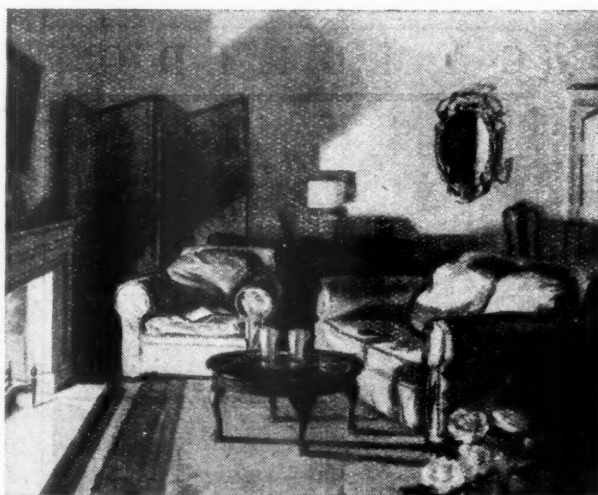


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SKYLINE**

American Fitting Shoes

Individually fitted to your feet for length, width,
and girth as every size is made in several fittings.

C. & J. CLARK LTD. (Wholesale only) STREET, SOMERSET



A SEAT BY THE FIRE

In a few moments, two people will come back into the room, close the door and settle down to toast their toes for another half hour before going to bed.

"Who are they?" you ask.

Two people whose energy has been sapped by the work and worry of the day... people who need the promise of deep sleep tonight and fresh vigour tomorrow... a promise most surely contained in those two glasses of Horlicks standing ready on the table.

Horlicks is still not plentiful, but the shops are sharing out what they have as fairly as possible.

HORLICKS

Charivaria

THE Board of Trade announces that three-quarter and thigh-length rubber boots can now be supplied without permits. This is regarded as an official indication that the worst of the floods is over.

"Borrow this book or, at a pinch, buy it," urges a reviewer. He himself didn't have to use any of the three methods he mentions.



"CABINET SWING BY WHITSUN"
 "Evening News" headline.
 An alternative to the use of the guillotine.

Owing to the shortage of green vegetables many May-fair housewives are said to be boiling pineapple-tops to go with the week-end joint.

We hear of an American soldier over here during the war whose Christian name was Cholmondeley. What is not yet clear is what he used to reply to inquiries as to whether he had any gholmonde cholmonde.

It is alleged that wood is illegally used for luxury purposes. This may mean a trouser-press inquiry.

A cat, we are told, will never attempt to enter an aperture narrower than the span of its whiskers. For the same reason ex-fighter pilots rarely use the Underground.

The son of an American doctor has announced his intention of becoming a professional jitter-bug dancer. We trust that the doctor approves his son's choice of chorea.

"There are no grumbles nowadays about foreign eggs being dumped in this country," says a writer. Not that cuckoos ever cared.

"The use of salt for snow clearing, after an experiment Friday, was discontinued, because (a) it was too snow was do deep it melted the cold (the weather), and (b) the salt instead of vice-versa. So shovel gangs continued to remove it the old-fashioned way."

Montreal paper.

As we think, wisely.

An ornithologist points out that the nest of the blue-tit may often be found in some disused structure. The street-lamps down our way should be full of them.



The Government, it is said, has a plan for staggering the next crisis.

"Gloucester also decided in favour of Sunday cinemas on Monday."—*"Gloucestershire Echo."*

Everybody happy?

One London dairy company organized and paid for a week-end holiday in the country for all its employees at Easter. The main idea, we understand, was to enable them to see a cow.



The Author to His Head

O IDLE and incorrigible cranium
Why do I fill you up
With facts about art and economics and uranium,
You poor inverted cup?

Ideologies and isms and concertos and statistics
And interminable lists of names
Of painters and politicians, of murderers and mystics
And players of games.

You lumber-room of nonsense, you rag-bag, you emporium
Of left-off remnants, you receptacle of hay,
What did you do with those lectures about thorium
I lent you the other day?

Is there any limit to the number of notorious
And beautiful people, you sieve, you net,

Whom I pass into your keeping, illuminate and glorious,
And you forget?

In a world where obviously everything worsens
Cannot you remember overnight
The names of the thousands of self-sacrificing persons
Who are putting it right?

Culture and science, like a sister and a brother,
A little more labour with our ales and cakes,
And the East and the West are encircling one another
Like a couple of snakes.

Beads of perspiration break out on you and glisten:
. I will tell you what we'll do, you poor old dunce,
We will buy two more radios and turn them on and listen
To all three programmes at once. EVOE.

A Journalist Remembers.

IT is many years now since I began my journalistic career under the leadership of Horatius McGargle, but I still remember vividly our first meeting in the editorial sanctum of the *Handywoman*.

"Tell me," he asked, leaning forward over his massive desk, "can you spend a day on your bicycle, searching for the story that always eludes you? Can you stumble across country, often faint with hunger, as you follow the Hunt and record its sport with fingers almost too numb with cold to grasp your stump of pencil? Can you return to the office with your material, and in a bedlam of noise create a crisp, sparkling narrative, oblivious of the oaths, and perhaps the blows, of some exasperated superior?"

"No," I said, "I don't think I can."
"However that may be," he said shortly, "you start on Monday."

Horatius Shippon McGargle had risen in an astonishingly short time from humble beginnings to a position of great power. Turning his back, at the age of seventeen, on his native Auchtermuchtie, he had come south with a collapsible hen-pen, hoping to take London by storm. The hen-pen was a failure, and in desperation the dour young Highlander turned to journalism. A monograph on Boll Weevil, sent to the *Sculptor's Chronicle*, happened to catch the eye of its youthful editor, the brilliant Hamish McQuimpha. He sent for McGargle and offered him a position on the paper.

The *Chronicle* was at this time in a bad way. Its proprietor, the immensely wealthy Angus Ardrossan, regarded it as a means of forcing upon an indifferent public the work of his three sons, a group of granite figures sitting at office desks, said to symbolize the commercial advance of Scotland. He wished to increase the price of the paper from sixpence to a shilling, and to publish it bi-weekly instead of weekly. The dragon-fly mind of McQuimpha visioned a gradual change of character from which the paper would finally emerge as an organ expounding the latest views on reincarnation, with a lively sports page. He favoured a reduction in price to a penny, the paper to be published daily.

The clash between these wilful and brilliant personalities shook the *Chronicle* to its foundations. Now appearing as a fortnightly, now as a daily with a Friday sporting edition featuring a Tibetan page, sometimes priced at half-a-crown, sometimes at twopence, the paper lost all stability and the public viewed it with increasing bewilderment.

With the coming of McGargle all dissension vanished as if by magic. Dour Ardrossan and mercurial McQuimpha alike were charmed or bludgeoned into agreement with his views. Within a week the *Sculptor's Chronicle* had become *The Soil*, a penny daily with a strong feminine interest and a leaning towards Free Trade. McGargle himself wrote the

first leader, a slashing attack on insect pests.

From that time he had gone from strength to strength. Leaving *The Soil* in a flourishing condition, he became associated with the *Two-Shilling Piece*, a financial journal with powerful backing in the city, which later, as "Byre and Stall," was to gain an international reputation by its inspired handling of the unsavoury "Pig Corner" scandal. Move succeeded move, until at last he sat in the editor's chair of the *Handywoman*, a position he had occupied for no more than a few days when I joined the paper.

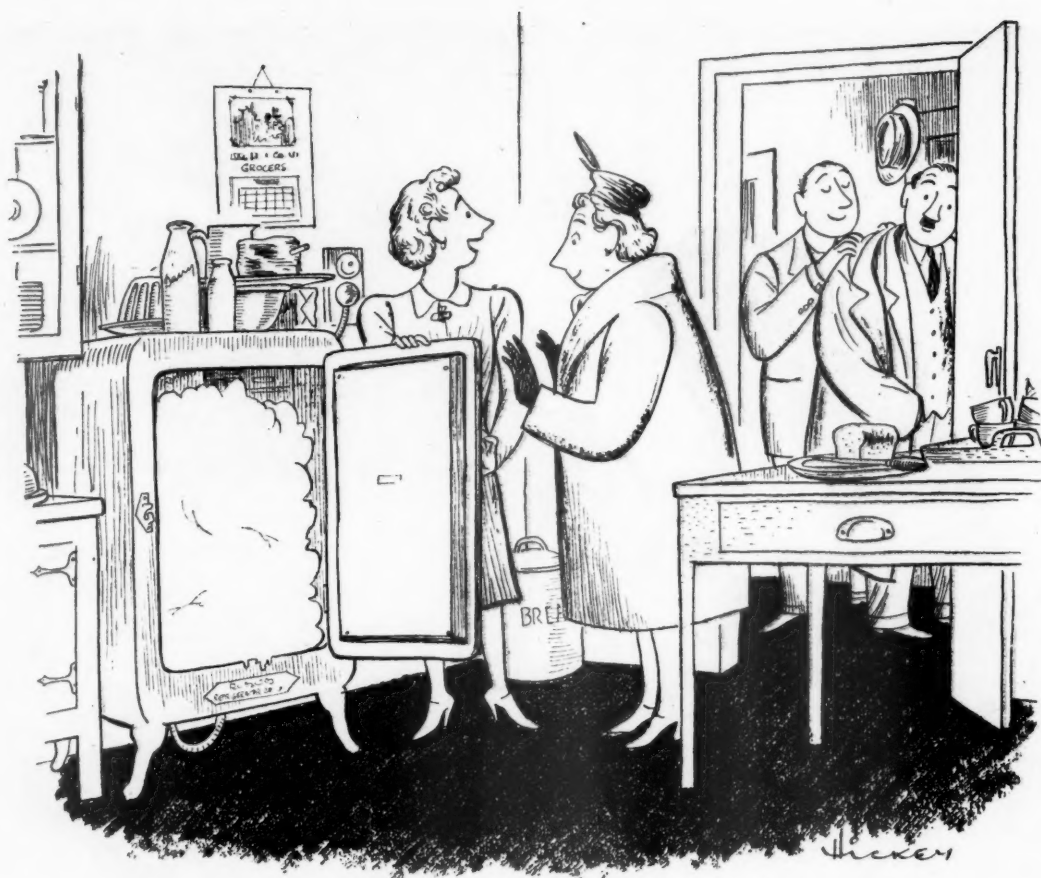
The task of instructing me in my new duties was entrusted to Mrs. Leebie McQuhattie, a prominent figure in Fleet Street, whose "Fifty Ways with Steel" had caused something of a sensation. She set me to write an article entitled "Dynamite: Simple Blasting for the Modern Handywoman." "Always remember," she said, "that you are Shakespeare's countryman. Pack your work tight with humanity." She warned me against grammatical errors and against precocious attempts at wit. "Read Ruskin," she said. "On how many pages do we find 'You was' or 'I done it'?" We may enjoy a quiet chuckle with Carlyle, but his clowning is never carried to excess."

I sat down to consider how I might best present my subject, and soon decided that the most effective opening would be a bright description of a



THE SAWN-OFF CONSCRIPT

"And now we come to my most wonderful trick . . ."



"I'm just showing Ella some of the snow we had down here in February."

modern handywoman blasting a tree-stump out of her garden. Hardly, however, had I written the word "Bang!" when the door opened and Mr. McGargle looked in. "Let your first effort," he said, "be entitled 'The Woman Smallholder.'"

When I explained the position to Mrs. McQuhattie she said that she had expected something of the kind. "McGargle means to make some sweeping changes," she said. "As to what they may be, I will say only this: a new name-plate for the front entrance was delivered yesterday. On it was engraved 'The Plough.'"

We had not long to wait. On the following day Mrs. McQuhattie's column "Chips from the Bench" was replaced by "Heard in the Cowshed." Our serial was a tale of a mysterious woman carpenter and of her refusal to sacrifice her career for a handsome gypsy. The author was instructed to introduce a farming interest without

delay. Within a week the *Handy-woman* was no more; the old sign was removed and in its place stood "The Plough" in large gold letters.

Ignorant as I was of my craft, it seemed to me all one whether I wrote of pigs or poker-work. The others were not so indifferent, and the building hummed like a hive with their discontent. While they talked, however, McGargle acted. Before the day was out every member of the staff had received a brand-new penholder from the hand of the editor himself. Objections went down before his wit and charm, and truculence was met with a fighting front. (When the assistant editor, a giant of a man, shouldered his way into the room to protest, McGargle rose up from behind his desk and raised his fists in a defensive attitude.) Mrs. McQuhattie went in with her resignation and came out with a mellow old first edition of "Scaly-leg in the Poultry Run." It

soon became clear that the new programme would not be opposed.

In writing my "Woman Smallholder" I had the benefit of Mr. McGargle's constant advice and encouragement. He had a theory that the creative artist is often privileged to tap a sort of reservoir of world thought, and that on such occasions he would be likely to rise to heights otherwise unattainable. From this reservoir, he maintained, had come his "Boll Weevil," the monograph that had brought him fame. Except for a paragraph on chemical fertilizer, which came from my pen at white-heat, and a peculiar prickling at the back of my neck as I was endeavouring to throw some thoughts on swine fever into a comely form, I had no sense of any such contact. However this may be, Mr. McGargle was good enough to say that my "Woman Smallholder" had a creditable breadth. "Depth," he said, "will come with practice."

Mr. Larrimer and the Cakes

MRS. LARRIMER stood before the mirror, tucking stray wisps of hair under her hat and pulling on her gloves with her teeth. She was never very happy on Thursdays until her weekly encounters with Mr. Savinal, the butcher, and Mr. Corcoran, the greengrocer, had been satisfactorily concluded. But it would be a mistake to suggest that she was depressed: Mrs. Larrimer's mind was perfectly adjusted for bringing the merest trace of a silver lining into spectacular focus. As she checked the cash and coupons in her purse she wondered how Messrs. Savinal and Corcoran were feeling this bleak April morning—and smiled broadly.

But her face was dreadfully stern when it was poked into the kitchen a few moments later. Mr. Larrimer was sitting before the fire reading a newspaper and snuffing extravagantly. When Mr. Larrimer had a cold he felt very sorry for himself, possibly because he got so little sympathy from Mrs. Larrimer. He turned his head miserably towards the door and awaited his wife's instructions with a look of martyrdom.

"The bread-man will call in about twenty minutes, the laundry at eleven-fifteen. Take two small loaves, pay for the laundry, and, if you're asked to, take Mrs. Wishart's, but don't pay for it. I'm also expecting some coke. See that we get the number of bags stated on the invoice and tell them we pay by cheque. If a woman calls for a collecting envelope, it's on the hall-stand with sixpence in it. I'm going queueing, but I hope to be back by one o'clock. If you feel yourself sinking make a cup of tea, but remember we're short of sugar."

Mr. Larrimer grunted.

"Don't set the place on fire while I'm out," went on Mrs. Larrimer, "and don't make any mistakes with the bread and the laundry. Two small loaves, remember, and pay for the laundry. It'll be about four and six."

Mrs. Larrimer hurried away.

For several minutes Mr. Larrimer tried to read his paper. When he saw a headline announcing that Mr. Strachey had been harried by a deputation from some society of women he made a noise half-way between a sigh and a groan. He read a short paragraph about an elderly insurance clerk who had been poisoned by his wife, and another about an over-zealous policewoman. Then Mr. Larrimer let the paper slip from his fingers.

What kind of life was this, anyway? he asked himself. Why the devil couldn't a man have a cold in the head without being made to feel a spineless shirker? Always complaining were women, always grumbling about the ghastly problem of trying to find something appetising for the next meal. Never a thought for those who have to eat their blessed meals, and *daren't* complain. Oh, dear, no! Selfish to the core. It used to be, "You men have all the luck. How would *you* like to be tied to the house all day long? If only we could get out for a bit sometimes." Now they use a bit of queueing as an excuse to go off four or five days a week on shopping jaunts, buy up every conceivable bit of rubbish, and come home footsore and weary and start shedding crocodile tears if tea isn't ready. Women!

Mr. Larrimer blew his nose to emphasize his indignation.

Why, dash it all, what shopping was there to do? Half the tradesmen brought their wares to the door. Bread, fuel, laundry, milk, newspapers, fish . . . no, by heavens, it was *more* than half! He, Mr. Larrimer, was going to do the *real* household shopping that very morning. And they talk about queueing!

And as for Molly! Well, she was getting worse every day. Try to start an intelligent conversation in the evening and what happened? *Hm, hm, hm, hm, hm*. Like talking to a stone wall. Interested in nothing, nothing but trouble—prices, rations, shortages and queues. Not the slightest, remotest interest in *ideas*. That theory of his about the eye always

turning instinctively to the second column of the right-hand page of a newspaper. Surely that deserves something more than—see, what was it she'd said? "Have you written to Jack?" Have I written to Jack!

Of course Molly was all right at heart. Nothing fundamentally wrong. Better than being married to a horror like old Biddle's wife. That party we went to at their place. Talk, talk, talk, empty-headed chatter . . . She said . . . And old Biddle had tried to shut her up by telling that long story about . . . And all the time she'd got the wireless going full blast with a beastly dance-band banging away. Bang-bang-bang, crash-crash-crash, bang-bang-bang . . .

Mr. Larrimer stirred uneasily and opened his eyes. Bang-bang-bang. That was the door. Bread or laundry? See, what was it he'd got to do? Two small loaves, pay for the laundry and take Mrs. Wishart's for her. He blew his nose and struggled to the front door.

"Well . . .?" said Mrs. Larrimer.

HOD.

Resignation Corner

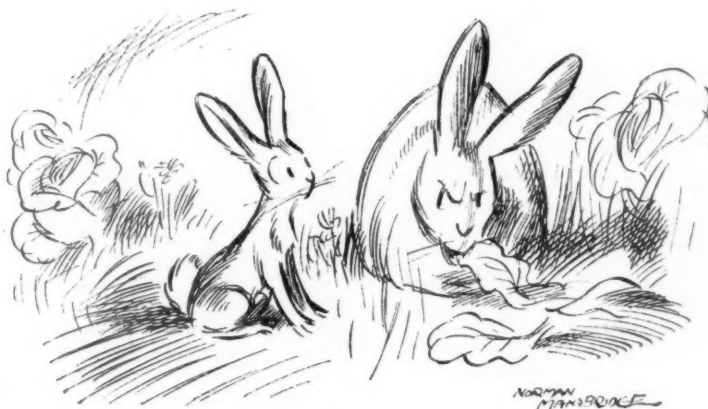
"INVENTOR has at last made money-making discovery and now awaits exploitation."

Advt. in "The Times."

"Fourteen thousand workers—3,500 of them women—have been working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for 23 months."

Manchester paper.

Must be nearly time for a cup of tea.



"Well, if you *MUST* know, you came out of a bat."

At the Pictures

CAPRA RIDES AGAIN

I FOUND it interesting to note how the sledgehammer effectiveness with which the point of *It's a Wonderful Life* (Director: FRANK CAPRA) was made, the skill with which its basic sentimentalities were put over, in the end had me approving of it as much as anybody and leaving it in the correct warm glow of humanitarian emotion. And this even after sitting through the first hour suspiciously checking each successive point of well-known popular appeal: the early personification of the rich man as automatically the "mean," frustrated villain, the implication of the familiar

world a better place, and I have no doubt that this is the mood that Mr. CAPRA wishes to induce and that it is the mood in which many thousands of people will swim for some time after seeing the picture. Say what you like, this is an achievement, and it may be a valuable one; if it could be given permanent effect half the world's troubles might be eased... The story, stripped of the heavenly whimsy—which, as one allergic to all whimsy, I can assure you has seldom been less offensively done—is of that favourite film character, the essentially kind, sympathetic, sentimental man who is everybody's friend and—after severe



(It's a Wonderful Life)

LITTLE MAN AND ANGELIC GUARDIAN

Clarence HENRY TRAVERS
George Bailey JAMES STEWART

reassuring moral that the "little people" are really the most important, the hammering in of the ideas of friendship and kindness, the guardian-angel whimsy and the heavenly dialogues. On a bus afterwards, when one man asked me if he was right for Liverpool Street and another asked me for a match, I satisfied their demands feeling that I was making the

trials—is richly rewarded as a result. JAMES STEWART is excellent in this part, and most of the other players are very good too; one can't say they have anything but stock characters to present, but they present them creditably, and the director's technical brilliance in handling the complicated counterpoint of noisy dialogue and action in violent group scenes is beautiful to watch. The big idea of the story—that a man who wishes he had never been born is shown exactly what everything would have been like without him, and that this emphatically reverses his wish—is put over, as I say, with sledgehammer effectiveness.

It is extremely rare to find the films venturing into the realm of full-length character-study (apart always from those fistfuls of standard tricks and grimaces that are usually dropped into the lap of the acknowledged "character actor"), and a study of a weak and unattractive character is even rarer. *The Man Within* (Director: BERNARD KNOWLES), from the novel by GRAHAM GREENE, is a study of a coward, that kind of weak and unattractive character most easy to work into a dramatic story; but still one is



(The Man Within)

SMUGGLER CHIEF

Carlyon MICHAEL REDGRAVE

surprised to reflect how unusual the attempt is. Another unusual point is that the narrative method which somebody once called "narratage" is used in a Technicolor costume picture, a story of smugglers on the coast of Sussex a hundred and fifty years ago: the whole thing is told by the unfortunate youth himself (RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH) in the most uncomfortable circumstances, some of the flashback scenes being linked by passages of his off-screen commentary. Many sequences are visually pleasing and show imaginative use of colour: for instance, the man-hunt among the trees with the ground swirling with mist, and several interiors reminiscent of Dutch paintings. The story, I think, does not come out very well. I found it quite confusing at the end.

La Fille du Puisatier, shown here as *The Well-Digger's Daughter* (Director: MARCEL PAGNOL), is not in the same street as the same director's *The Baker's Wife*. It has moments, of course, and an atmosphere, and above all it has RAIMU and FERNANDEL; but it is a much slighter, cruder, more obvious version of a similar simple Provençal village story. I wouldn't too much criticize the blurred, often apparently hasty photography, because there were no doubt great difficulties; the trouble is that the whole general tone of the piece is wrong. Far too often one is made aware that this is no real group of unsophisticated villagers, it is a few clever comedians having a game. The film is worth seeing for RAIMU; one more glimpse of RAIMU is worth a great deal; and FERNANDEL is there too. R. M.

I Am One of Those Ladies.

I AM one of those ladies
who are dying out;
one of those the Government
knows
what to do about.

Proud, but patently pleasant,
intelligent, kind;
gone is my day, shove me away
out of sight and mind.

What can I give the new world?
Nothing worth giving.
Nothing apart from the quiet art
of gracious living.

What do they want with manners?
With charm? With bright looks?
One glance and then, take up your pen,
strike me off the books.

I am one of those ladies
the world has cherished.
Happen, may be, it will miss me
when I am perished. V. G.

o o

Let's Play Soldiers.

UNCLE MIKE, will you come
and play soldiers with me and
Jean and David?"

"Yes, yes, do, Uncle Mike—you can
sit on the sofa and be a pill-box, and
George and I will attack you."

"How about me?"

"Oh! you can be a nurse and give
us blood and tea and tie labels on
us and sort of cherish the wounded
heroes."

"Uncle Mike, I'll Typhoon you first
with tennis-balls and then George and
I will do some fire and movement with
the cushions."

"Bags being wounded—and whisper-
ing something noble to David after
I've led the attack that finally
liquidates Uncle Mike."

"Children, children, do you really
want to play soldiers?"

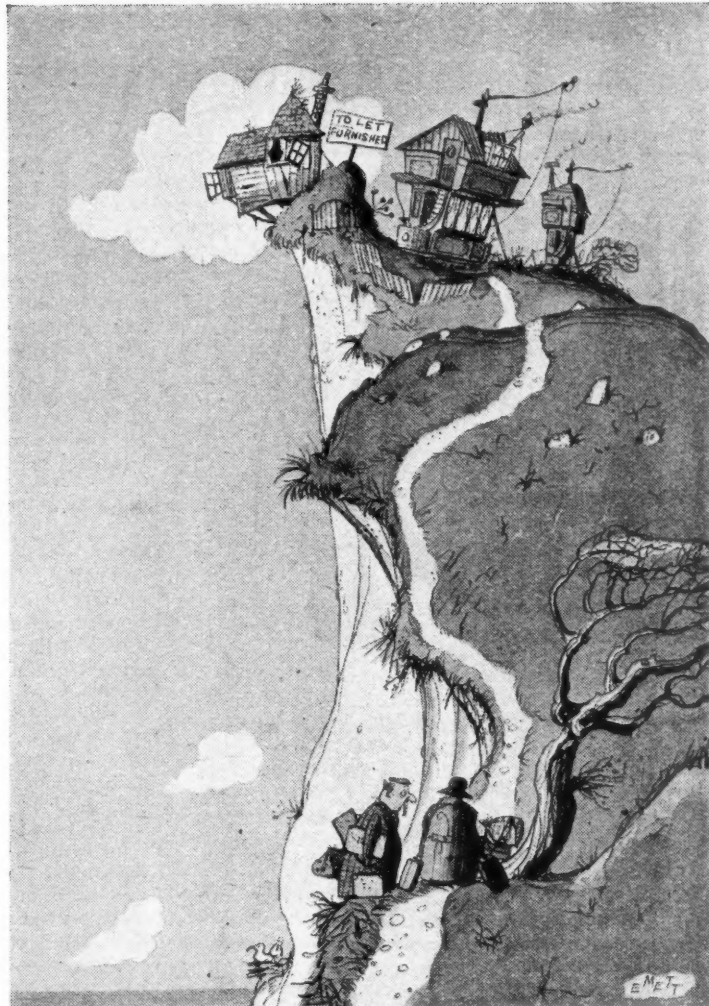
"Yes, yes, please, Uncle Mike, do,
please!"

"Well, I'll only play soldiers if we
all play properly—like real soldiers."

"Rather, Uncle Mike, of course
we'll do it properly."

"Very well then—George, run up-
stairs to my dressing-room and get my
braces to put on."

"But, Uncle Mike, I've got on a
belt."



"THAT must be it: 'Secluded position, stone's-throw from sea,
close to trams'."

"Proper soldiers always wear both,
George dear.

"David, ask cook for a bucket of
old tea, and four pint mugs.

"Jean, shut all the windows, stoke
up the fire and pretend it's a stove with
a red-hot funnel, and if there's a wire-
less anywhere in sight, turn it on.
Everybody ready? Good. Well, take
off your coats, roll up your sleeves and
start staring into space. George, I
think you ought to be singing as
slowly as possible, and, David, pick
up that poker and tap it ceaselessly
against something—you can whistle a
bit too if you like. Jean, I think you
had better put on daddy's overcoat
and some gym. shoes, and if anyone

asks you 'what you're on' (that's what
they'll say), look at them like a
wounded hare and just say one word
—Treatment. Sorry, one thing more
before we're ready. David, turn on all
the lights."

o o

Those Celebrity Close-ups

"... critics say that most newsreels are
misnamed. They do not give news, they
give features, and usually tiresome ones..."

Daily paper.

o o

"A.T.S. RELEASES LAG."

Heading in "Glasgow Herald."

How old?

Culture Again



"Very well, then—will you concede that we're the greatest of the THIRD-rate Powers?"

Mixed Grill

QUITE the worst of convalescence is the rapid
recrudescence
Of a keen ingrowing mess-sense which the cruel-
kind restrain,
Trotting out their metabolic medicine-mixture vitriolic
For the sys- or diastolic sufferer who mayn't
complain.
By the laws of therapeutics only nauseous pharma-
ceutics
Cure too many or too few ticks of the heart-clock out of
gear,
And, although I've not had colic nor been over-alcoholic,
I've had neither jot nor molecule of decent food this
year.
I sit up in bed with bib on, reading Rome's Decline (by
Gibbon),
Feeling I've to some Blue Ribbon Bar been called and
taken silk;
Cicero's *De Senectute* causes yearnings too (*ragoûter*),
Though the only rich and fruity I'm allowed to have is
milk.
Still, there's nothing like an essay! Hand me down my
Bacon, Bessie,
And my Lamb, of diction dressy. Some collation's only
fair,
And I'll wish a *pax vobiscum*, hoping you will have a kiss
come
Long before the time for viscum. (That's the dictionary
there.) J. B. N.

WHEN in my last piece I dismissed sculpture as something you get here and there in picture exhibitions, I was doing less than justice to a considerable department of art, indeed of life. Statues and such may, as I hinted, seem incidental at such exhibitions; little more than objects which those who think it arty to back away from pictures might bump into if they ever tried to do anything so ostentatious. But sculpture can make quite a good case for itself apart from the paintings it is apt to tag along with. For command of public respect, sheer weight and all-round finish sculpture has nothing to touch it in the art world. I propose therefore to devote my space to-day to this subject, and hope that what I say will appeal even to readers whose qualifications are no more definite than a half-conscious appreciation of the curly bits on toasting-fork handles. Sticklers may say that brasswork is not sculpture. That, more or less, is what I meant.

Literally, sculpture means carving, as the general public knows if only because the word has a scooping sound; but as far as the public can make out, if only because there seems to be no alternative, it is taken also to cover anything originally clay but resulting in bronze or plaster. By plaster I mean the substance people tap knowingly or timidly and find hollow, and by bronze I mean whatever it is the answers to quizzes say bronze is composed of. Carved sculpture is of course usually made of stone or marble, or more rarely wood. When it is wood the people looking at it can surmise what sort of wood for as long as they want to impress those out of earshot, but we may be sure that it is always a very hard wood, because sculptors, perhaps more than any other type of humanity, like life tough. The public knows this from the way it thinks of them on ladders banging chisels with mallets. It does not think of them on anything as easy as a step-ladder, though the public would be the last to call a step-ladder easy; and if it allows them a mallet and a chisel rather than the tools it itself always seems to have to use when scooping things out, that is because the public, with its sturdy commonsense, would not have much opinion of a sculptor who struggled through the world with a hammer and a screwdriver. There is little significance in the smock with which the public invests sculptors, or even in that wide black bow-tie with long ends. It just means that that is how the public thinks sculptors look, without exactly believing it.

WHAT I have said about ladders applies of course only to really big statues, the sort found outdoors or in museums. There are plenty of statues about in the entrance-halls of clubs and so on which any sculptor could reach to the top of without standing on anything more than a chair, and then only to stop his arms aching. If the public were to think for long enough of a sculptor banging away at the top of such a statue it would see him standing on an up-ended wooden box, the splintery sort with the number of cartons stencilled on one end; and this is interesting because it gives further proof of the gulf between sculptors and ordinary people. Ordinary people do not have such boxes about the house, or not for longer than it takes to run out of firewood, and anyway they know too much about boxes to stand on them sideways. But artists are different. I should add that it is not easy to think of the average statue in the average entrance-hall as ever having been worked on by anybody. It looks too smooth and brownish to be anything but ready-made. But



"Don't worry, there's nothing wrong with your husband that your kind nursing and someone else's cooking can't cure."

statues in film entrance-halls—the kind you see when the butler opens the door to someone going there to dinner and in for trouble—are another matter. Everyone knows, on being reminded, that they are made of *papier mâché* or icing-sugar, or something else imitation, which is why they look so real. The only other thing I want to say about the public's idea of sculptors is that it is not its fault that its mental image of the kind of sculptor who sculpts heads consists of a shiny photograph showing the finished head with the sculptor on one side looking artistic but successful, and a famous person on the other looking like the head only more standardized.

THE effect of sculpture on ordinary people is, as I have implied, impressive, but it is many other things too. Ordinary people like figures to be realistic rather than square. They have little use for the purely abstract, which they look on as lumps of stone or wood that happened to be that shape and only took a bit of polishing up. They find it easier to appreciate a head than a whole figure, especially if it is of someone well-known, because they have the satisfaction of guessing who and of realizing how the famous would look if dyed dark brown or white. They react favourably to ancient sculpture because it is ancient, to sundials because they remind them of fine weather, and bird-baths because they remind them of birds having baths. The effect of garden gnomes on the choosy is too well known to call for comment, but I do want to say that psychologists themselves are puzzled over the gnome set-up. They say that not even they have ever met anyone who has seen a gnome; and yet the shape, outfit and wary geniality of this extraordinary little figure are as preconceived and fostered as the twists in a stick of barley-sugar. Another homely aspect of sculpture that I should like to include is the imitation dogs sometimes seen in dog-shampoo shops. The job of this sort of dog is to look keen, which explains why it is always the same breed; the one you can copy with pipe-cleaners. Finally I must mention two facts about the Albert Memorial: that enough people have learnt to say they like it for it to be time now for the intelligentsia to say they shouldn't, and that the people who don't know what Albert is reading up there remember as soon as they are reminded.

I SHALL end with a note on something my readers weren't expecting: their own modelling experiences. Have they forgotten those little baskets of fruit they used to make with plasticine? Let me remind them of the thumb-marks they left when they pinched up the basket-sides, and the handle that broke when they twisted it, and it will all come back to them. They may even remember that mixing the green with the red for apples was a cad's trick, though in that instance on the smallest possible scale. Another triumph was a rather totem-like face they arrived at by rolling up a biggish ball, smearing their thumb down the front to make it flat and end in a chin, and adding such features as a triangular nose, two sort of parallel cigars for the mouth, and circular ears. The result was always much the same, and if it did look like some friend there was a general feeling that it was the friend's fault. There was also the little man: a round head, a round body, a row of round buttons and more cigars for the arms and legs. My readers will remember, in fact, that there was more rolling than actual modelling in their plasticine work; and scientists explain that this is because plasticine being rolled between the palms of the hands gets, as it were, taken over by the laws of nature and cannot help ending up round. Every other shape comes out a bit differently from how it is meant; and psychologists think that perhaps it is the memory of its own early lopsided efforts, and of the difficulty of sticking a triangular nose to a flat face so that it sticks, that gives the simple, muddled public some of its respect in later life for real sculpture.

Sea Shanty

"ACCORDING to the dictionary," said Commander Bung, "There are seventy spellings of *soldier* in the English tongue."
"Oh, I dare say," replied Commander Blue,
"And those are probably just the polite ones, too."

"We have been making extensive inquiries regarding a leakage from this petroleum office," said Supt. J. Lawrence.—"The Star."
We suspect a square peg in a round hole.



"... and there is no doubt that the recent floods were the worst in the history of broadcasting."



"Well, dear, how did the driving test go?"

At an Exhibition of Caged Birds

LO! in one prison's fastenings
Four thousand prisoners with wings.
No room to fly; scarce room to walk;
And some could sing, some almost talk.
To one of these I said "Will you
Now tell me of the woods you knew,
And what your friends, and where you
went,
Before the neat, convenient
And sheltered nook you now enjoy
Was given you? What news, my boy?"
But all he did was but to shout
"Oh, let me out! Oh, let me out."
"Have you no more than that to say?"
I said to him, and turned away
To find some reasonable bird.
And two I found, and then a third
And many more; but word for word,

With nothing learned by being tame,
The silly things said just the same.
"With all the forests you have seen,"
I said, "and the fair fields between
With all their floral tapestries,
You surely might have more than this
To tell us of the life you led
In freedom." But no more they said
Than this one melancholy shout,
"Oh, let us out! Oh, let us out!"
If I were shut with iron bars
By some vast creature from the stars,
A lifetime in a little space,
I trust that I should have the grace
To say more interesting things
To shapes that might go by with wings.
Although what else I'd utter, well,
I cannot at the moment tell.

Anon.



THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

"All I said was, you'll never reach my height if you keep worrying about your constitution."



"Confidentially, what do you do with your old blades?"

I, the Undersigned

THE Amateur Wrestling Association is presenting ambitious members with a moral I.O.U. If they want to be considered as candidates for the Olympic team of 1948 they must sign now a pro forma which begins: "I, the undersigned, promise to train . . ."

As a rugger player I too am awfully keen on training; scarcely anyone else is, and I am beginning to find out why. The committee say training is the only way to get into our First XV. I train, but I don't get into it, the argument being that if I need to train as hard as all that I can't be any good.

In some clubs you train at a riding school. We did this once, and it certainly causes you to come trotting prettily into the arena, looking for the ringmaster. You feel you are nodding and tossing your head as if you had plumes on your scrum-cap and bells on your jersey. Part of the idea of going to a riding school is that it makes you train with a certain conceit, your knees lifting high, your neck arched, and when you halt you do it as if you had been reined in, which has hurt your mouth. This, for no particular

reason, reminds me of a man who was always making queer grimaces and said he was doing it to see if his skin fitted.

Later we frequented a gymnasium. It is impossible to scrum in gym-shoes, and you are not allowed to wear boots. Neither are you allowed to kick a ball for fear of breaking the windows, or to run and pass because that would interfere with the elderly gentlemen who are nothing to do with the training but are lying about on the floor and motioning at the instructor with their legs.

The advantage of training in a gym is that people who are not training can turn up in bowler hat and striped trousers, with rolled umbrella and brief-cases, and peer through murky windows protected by wire netting in such a way that they can see you but you cannot see them. Forgetting this, they indicate by tapping their wrist-watches that time presses. When they realize you cannot see them they push squeaky swing-doors and tip-toe agitatedly inside, until they can poke you with their evening paper, or give another signal with a bent elbow de-

noting that they are going over to the Red Cow and will wait for you there.

It used to be thought rather a good idea to train on the field itself, using the light of various car-lamps. But people were either late turning up with their cars, or got there too early, and wanted to drive away just as everyone was coming out on to the field.

One night one fellow who didn't even know there was any training but thought he had discovered a parking-place which would be extremely useful to know, swung his car round and backed it straight into the scrum, thinking that it was a heap of farm-refuse because it was steaming. So that was discontinued and people elected to run round the roads.

Running round the roads is interesting psychologically, because everyone feels embarrassed by it except the fellow running. He thinks he is the most interesting thing that has happened in that street all the evening.

People who run round the streets at night always look as if their shorts were slipping down, the question being whether they can get home before they drop off, which is why they are running.

They are naturally very serious about the prospects and will not exchange jokes with taxi-men, even when they keep glancing at their wrist-watches, which tempts taxi-men to ask "How much on the clock now, chum?"

The worst experience connected with running round the roads happened to a man in our club who wanted to get out of the "A" into the 1st, and only succeeded in getting dropped to the "B" because whenever the team secretary rang up to ask him to play for the first he was loyally told this chap was out running, which made him think the chap would be too tired by Saturday to run any more.

Well, he was finishing a run one

night when a girl shot out of a side turning with a lot of drama, and begged him to catch up a man who had just stolen her purse. This fellow was doubling up the road in a flapping rain-coat, making a lot of noise with his boots and holding on a filthy old hat with one hand.

My friend was just at the end of an exhausting journey, and hardly knew how he was going to reach the end of it, anyway. His head was rolling from side to side, there was mist on his glasses, and he was wheezing. He summoned his last reserve of stamina, and after running twice round the block, once in one direction and once in the other, found himself passing the

girl again, who said in a sort of dying voice: "Good heavens, you *don't* mean you let him get away? But, my dear man, you were *dressed* for it and he was lumbered up with all his outdoor clothes on! Why," she said, "it would have been better for me if you had stolen the purse, and then I could have asked him to catch you."

Then while he still glistened and panted she said sadly: "Well—I've lost everything I came out with. Can you at least lend me threepence to get home on the bus?"

He hadn't even got pockets in his shorts. So I can only wish these wrestlers more luck than most people have who train.

Mulenzia

I AM in the middle of my first good week in bed since 1939. In the early days of the war I just didn't seem able to find time to have influenza, and then in the Middle East I had malaria instead. Technically of course I was in bed with it, but being in bed in an Army hospital on the edge of the Sinai desert with malaria has few, if any, of the attractions of being in bed at home with influenza, especially if your wife is in Manchester and you have the flat to yourself and can enjoy your influenza in your own way.

I felt it coming on last Wednesday morning, the symptoms being an even greater distaste than usual for work of any sort, a tendency to brood about the world situation, and a loud hacking cough that blew out the matches with which I attempted to light my pipe. I looked into my diary to see how many engagements I had for the following seven days, decided that the universe would just manage to struggle along if I skipped them all, and then went out shopping. By laying emphasis on my decrepitude I softened the hearts of the tradesmen, and returned home laden with seven days' provisions, including half a bottle of rum and two hundred cigarettes.

Returning home I moved my bed into the only warm room in the flat—the one with the stove with little windows in it. I denuded the coal-cellar and ranged the coal in buckets against the wall of my temporary bedroom. Then I piled the bed high with curtains, table-cloths, overcoats, etc., put food and crockery within reach, stuck a notice on the outer door to say I was not to be disturbed, turned on the wireless, undressed, and crawled between the sheets.

So far I have had four delightful days, restful and extremely educative. In this room there is an extension loud-speaker that works from the radiogram in a room at the far end of a long and extremely cold passage, and it can only be turned off by making this long and hazardous journey. So generally I have listened nearly all day, and have gathered much useful and valuable information about tin mines in Cornwall, how steel is tempered, the meaning of co-partnership, and how to make an igloo and parsnip ketchup.

For reading matter I have stuck solidly to Dickens, except for one regretted lapse into Captain Marryat. Let me make it quite clear that I have nothing against Captain Marryat as a writer of stories, and in normal health I can thoroughly enjoy him. But when I am ill I like to keep away from modern politics, and to my horror I found that Newton Forster kept deviating into diatribes on the Indian situation. I found that Captain Marryat, writing in 1832, had firm and decided views on India policy. The place, in his opinion, was just an expense and a general pain in the neck, and the thing to do with it was to give it back to the princes. This led me to a rather alluring train of thought that ended in a headache; so I switched without hesitation to *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Unless I run out of cigarettes and thus stop coughing I hope to remain in bed long enough to finish *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. By using my already magnificent pile of fag-ends in my pipe I might even cough long enough to add *Bleak House* and *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings*, but that is perhaps too much to hope for.

As to the influenza itself, I always

try to be scrupulously fair to the Labour Government and to applaud any part of the national pattern that seems to have improved under their regime, and I feel bound to say that this is a far pleasanter sort of influenza than I used to get under Conservative or National Governments. It is, in fact, in some ways more like a mild attack of malaria, and I shall tell them at the club next week that it was Mulenzia, which sounds rather distinguished and eastern.

Instead of depressing me mentally it has flooded my mind with a rather delightful senile benevolence. I should like all my enemies to gather round my bed so that I could pat them on their heads and bless them with a gentle smile. I should forgive them all. That is of course so long as they made no inroads on my already much-dwindled supply of rum.

"A horse sick with 'flu in an Edinburgh stable has had three glasses of whisky daily recommended as a medicine by the vet.

'There is an epidemic of 'flu among horses all over the country,' a leading Edinburgh vet. said yesterday."

Aberdeen paper.

Well, what would you expect?

"The police are still baffled about the young woman who two weeks ago wandered into a Cowes (Isle of Wight) café and asked the staff who she was.

"Medical opinion is that the woman is suffering from loss of memory . . ."

Sunday paper.

Ah! the police are always being bothered by amateurs' wild theories.



"But, darling, Daddy's not going to punish you for playing with coal. He only wants to know where you found it."

Misleading Cases

In re Haddock

MR. JUSTICE WOOL gave judgment in this important will case to-day. He said:

In this action certain persons and associations, most of whom are well-known charities, dispute the terms of the last will and testament of the late Theophilus Haddock, a wealthy manufacturer. The testator left the bulk of his fortune to his nephew, an old friend of this Court, Mr. Albert Haddock, on the queer condition that he devote himself to the foundation and direction of a publishing business with the main purpose of exposing and correcting any fallacies or harmful notions present in the minds of His Majesty's Ministers and their political supporters. The charities, who have a residuary interest under the will, have challenged the bequest to Mr. Albert Haddock and ask for it to be set aside as being contrary to public policy: and this contention the Court is now required to examine.

It has two barrels. First, say the plaintiffs, through the persuasive

mouth of Sir Ethelred Rutt, a bequest cannot be upheld the purpose of which is to start and sustain a systematic attack upon Ministers of the Crown. When reminded that the subject was still permitted, though not always encouraged, to criticize Ministers in the public sheets, Sir Ethelred distinguished between the spontaneous, occasional, railing of a citizen who has nothing to gain but the good of his country, and the habitual manufacture of mercenary abuse, solely inspired by the conditions of a will. But for this bequest, said Sir Ethelred, Mr. Haddock might never have been moved to find fault with the Ministers at all, and, though that, he later agreed, was putting his case a little high, it must, he said, be repugnant to the Court to permit the malice and the money of a dead man to direct the defendant into such courses continually.

I find this distinction a little too fine. For one thing, the will says nothing about "attacks" or "abuse". The testator's desire is that "any fallacies

or harmful notions present in the minds of His Majesty's Ministers" shall be "exposed and corrected". And surely this is no evil aspiration. To the Ministers, it is true, the exposition of their errors by others may always be odious—amounting to "attack" or "abuse"—and the correction of their errors by themselves may be difficult and distasteful. But this is not to say that it is against public policy to aim at right thinking and conduct in the King's Ministers and their supporters, even if the attempt be made despairingly by a citizen on his death-bed. On the contrary, I am attracted by an opinion expressed by Sir Horace Walpole in one of his letters, to the effect (I forget the exact language) that all Ministers should be regarded as public enemies, capable of doing immense harm in a moment if they are not carefully watched; and therefore any damage that may be done to their vanity or reputation is not to be considered beside the benefits that may

fall to the State from continual invigilation and even unjust censure of the King's Ministers. Here, then, the plaintiffs fail: though, remembering the exuberance and ingenuity of Sir Ethelred's argument, I hope they will not be too hard on him, and will happily pay the costs.

But the second barrel holds a weightier charge. It is common ground that, apart from any public motives in the mind of the testator, his intention was that his nephew should conduct the publishing business upon the ordinary lines of private enterprise, should not permit his expenditure to exceed his receipts, and, in short, should make a profit. The plaintiffs say that, whatever its general purpose, a bequest which at this date contemplates the creation of a profit-making private enterprise, and adds new fuel to the "profit-motive", must be against "public policy" and ought to be of no effect.

Now, "public policy" is a field in which it is delightful for any judge to be let loose, since it changes its face with the passing of the years, and he is here not bound by dusty precedents as he is in other areas of the law. In olden days, many a contract, bequest or legacy was set aside as "against public policy" for the reason that it was "in restraint of trade". But not even Sir Ethelred, I think, would have the hardihood to plead such a cause to-day.

Sir Ethelred Rutt: Is your Lordship familiar with *Fantail v. The Port of London Authority* (2 A.C. 1946)?

His Lordship: No. To-day no trade is exercised without restraint. Our entire economy, the whole philosophy of the Administration, is founded upon the restraint of trade, and there are those who maintain that we are unlikely to emerge from our present troubles until trade is more powerfully restrained than it is. In the consideration of "public policy" the Court is bound to take judicial cognisance of social facts and tendencies on which in another class of case it would require to be fed with evidence. And here—though, it is true, the point may not be directly relevant to the case before me—is a good example. The law of "public policy" must change with the changing circumstances of the national life.

I have now to consider whether Sir Ethelred Rutt has put his finger upon another such example in the present case. It is true that if the Court allows its gaze to wander, as in such disputes it must, outside these four walls, it discovers the doctrine of profit in as much discredit as the

doctrine of restraint of trade. And, of course, the two are intimately connected. Trade, it was held, must not be unduly restrained by contract, for every man must be free to produce the best that was in him, and do the best that he could for himself. Now all is different. The better a man does for himself, the more he will be reckoned a public enemy. A proportion of his earnings ranging from 50 to 90 per cent. will be taken from him and given to others. And not even this transaction will be accounted to him for credit. It is called Redistributing the National Wealth: and he is rewarded neither by gratitude from the recipients nor praise from the distributors of the money he has earned. Sneers and hostility mark the utterances of both. Long ago, in one of the many actions between *Haddock* and the *Inland Revenue* the Court considered whether the earning of an income by private effort should not juridically be regarded as an activity with at least a criminal taint. The Court came to no decision; but to-day in the public mind there is no doubt. Only if a man acquires much money by successfully predicting the results of

animal-races or football-matches will his fellows smile upon him and the tax-collector leave him alone. All other forms of private industry are reviled—and robbed. Ministers of the Crown never weary of denouncing the profit-motive, though without it the Revenue of the Crown would be in a pretty mess. Nor, if a man should undertake to give all his profits to the poor, would, it appears, the institution of a new private enterprise be welcome to the prevailing opinion of the time. For if it failed it would be inefficient, and if it succeeded it should be in the hands of the State. In either case he is unlikely to be granted all the necessary licences and permits until he has reached an age when the spirit of invention and enterprise may well be dormant or dead.

In all these circumstances I conclude, with the usual reluctance, that Sir Ethelred Rutt is right. This bequest, being directed to the establishment of a new profit-making private enterprise, is against the public policy of the time and cannot be allowed. But this annoys me: and the other litigants, as usual, will pay Mr. Albert Haddock's costs. A. P. H.

The Danger at Beards

(A tendency towards a common adoption of full beards causes our Danish correspondent to send us the following.)

IT has been alleged that the mode of growing a full beard would be economical as we should spend no money at the barber's. This is, however, only a fancy, as a total adoption of beards would put the barbers out of a job. The community would have to feed them, which would make the taxes to increase.

Although a general adoption of full beards, according to our statement above, is not advisable, this does not exclude that beards may be grown when it will serve certain occupational or practical purposes.

In heraldry, for instance, beards are indispensable, because where should we else get the bearded warriors for the kingdoms' arms?

Further, it is obvious that polar explorers wear a beard, as it shelters.

Whether people with a full beard are sleeping with the beard upon the feather-bed, or beneath it, is a question which has always piqued the public curiosity. However, we are not going to deal with this question here, as we consider it a matter belonging to private life.

We shall only draw the reader's attention to the fact that it is not without danger to wear a beard. You should not come close to horses, as they may think it is a tuft of hay, and begin to pull it. In this case you are wise to yield and carry on an elastic defence while thinking of some amusing remark which can make the horse laugh, thus getting it to let go.

Further, you should be very cautious at underground trains. If you get your beard jammed in the doors when slamming, you have to run along with the train.

Finally, we must not omit to point at the greatest risk at beards: it may grow so thick that you can't find your mouth; and thus you run the risk of starving.

Blunt Words

"Deploring use of sharp cutting instruments for the purpose of wounding, the magistrate sentenced Raymond Henry of La Brea to three months' imprisonment after he had convicted him of wounding George Joseph, his fellow villager."

Trinidad paper.

THE Shakespeare Festival at Stratford-upon-Avon opened with a burst of stage sunshine in grateful contrast with the arctic rain whipping the theatre and with the angry, swollen river which licked its walls. Mr. PETER BROOK was rightly determined not to let us forget that Verona is in Italy. His production of *Romeo and Juliet* was more interesting visually than from the point of view of acting. When he went to consult Mr. SHAW on his handling of the play he was advised to go for young lovers and realistic fights. This counsel has been faithfully followed.

Miss DAPHNE SLATER is eighteen, Mr. LAURENCE PAYNE twenty-six. Both have the freshness of youth, but neither is able to give more than a faint impression of mounting passion and despair; that is to say, the meeting at the ball and the raptures of the balcony scene they manage well enough, but when *Juliet* is become a resolute adult in rebellion against family and convention, and *Romeo* a tragic exile, then the task is beyond them. Miss SLATER looks less than her age, an impression which is not dispelled by the childishness of what appears to be a white nightdress; so that one cannot escape the feeling that the little figure sobbing in her nannie's arms is only in some nursery difficulty instead of in the throes of a thwarted and devouring love. Calculated severity in her later dresses would surely have helped.

Why, I wonder, did *Juliet* after the ball have to walk right across the stage to a rooted *Romeo*, which made her seem much the more eager of the two?

Was *Romeo* supposed to be grappling with his last qualms about *Rosaline*? And how did Mr. BROOK justify cutting the scene in which *Juliet* gets the philtre from *Friar Laurence*, and also the scene of reconciliation between the warring houses, the one vital to the story, the other rounding off its larger issue, and no mere sop to sentiment? Mr. SHAW's second point produced a rare display of swordsmanship, not just a noisy clash of steel but exciting fights which must have been rehearsed to a millimetre. *Tybalt* was too easily slain, and some of the duels ranged awkwardly up and down a ramp, but

At the Play

they were nevertheless hair-raising. The young gallants were altogether the strongest suit. Mr. PAUL SCOFIELD, whose acting is always imaginative, made a good *Mercutio*, Mr. JOHN HARRISON's *Benvolio* and Mr. MYLES EASON's *Tybalt* were clear-cut and intelligent, and Mr. DONALD SINDEN gave *Paris* the dignity required to hold his own in socially very trying circumstances. Among the seniors there



(The Animal Kingdom)

THE YOUNG MASTER WHO WANTED TOO MUCH— HIS MAN WHO TOOK IT.

Cecelia Henry	MISS ELIZABETH ALLAN
Tom Collier	MR. FRANK LAWTON
Richard Regan	MR. NIAL MACGINNIS
Daisy Sage	MISS RENÉE ASHERSON

were two caricatures. Miss BEATRIX LEHMANN played the *Nurse* as something between the Red Queen and a Piccadilly flower-woman, a dry, rheumatic creature, not as earthy as tradition would have had her; and Mr. WALTER HUDD played *Capulet* with the jerky fussiness of an aged military man organizing a village fête. I thought both were amusing but a little overdone. *Lady Capulet*, the *Prince* and *Friar Laurence* were more normally taken by Miss VERONICA TURLEIGH, Mr. ROBERT HARRIS and Mr. JOHN RUDDOCK. The dresses, many of them lovely, were more successful than the

sets, where Mr. ROLF GÉRARD had gone in for stylized fragments, fragments but for a central edifice on the roof of which *Juliet* improbably had a four-poster, obliging the bedroom scene to be played at what seemed an unromantic altitude. To sum up, an uneven affair in which acting and sometimes speech fell short, but in which a welcome vigour, excellent crowd scenes and skilful lighting were evident.

Mr. PHILIP BARRY's *The Animal Kingdom*, at the Playhouse, was written between the wars and its sentiments are faded. I believe New York liked it, but I shall be surprised if London does. It seems to me a play in which false attitudes are struck for theatrical effect by characters (some superfluous) bearing little or no relation to life. Conceived on a wittier note and produced in a more plausible atmosphere the story might just have been worth telling, but can we be expected to be much interested in the ditherings of a spoilt young man between the mistress he still loves and the wife he has thoughtlessly married, when none of the three convince us? *Tom* is purely a creature from a holiday magazine. He is supposed to be poor, his millionaire father having cut off supplies in disapproval at his way of life; yet he has a country house and a car and a manservant and can afford to drink too much and travel. He is supposed to have taste, being afflicted by the desire once common in gilded youth to publish the more unreadable

authors on hand-made paper; yet his house is execrably furnished. He is supposed to be happiest among bohemians; yet even in the country he dresses with the nattiness of a stage stockbroker. In truth this is an intensely ordinary young man, sadly out of his depth. It is something of a triumph for Mr. FRANK LAWTON's engaging acting that we grow to like him at all; even he, however, cannot make us care very deeply whether *Tom* goes back to his mistress (which he does) or puts his irresolute head in the oven. Miss RENÉE ASHERSON plays his lady, an accredited pillar of the

sandalled set, perfectly charmingly, but she appears no more bohemian than the Minister of Fuel (and Power). Tom's wife, who begins by showing loyalty and courage and then inexplicably becomes a horrid bad lot, gives Miss ELIZABETH ALLAN a bare half chance, which she takes bravely. The one live character in the piece, worth all the rest put together, is the ex-heavyweight valet. He comes in like an Atlantic gale to serve cocktails and then drink them, and the only bracing scene of the evening is when he and his master screw themselves up to give one another the sack. Mr. NIALL MACGINNIS plays him with grand gusto.

Neighbours, by Mr. ANTHONY MERRY, at the Boltons Theatre, is a pleasantly contrived conveyor-belt for a series of individual bits and pieces which never properly come together. It is a suburban documentary of family banalities, of joy and sadness and dampened aspiration, but these are so mildly indicated and so loosely

assembled that they make no great impression. Mr. MERRY's characters have their little crises in such emotion-tight compartments that there is no general conflagration and no dramatic climax. They are real enough, but they are condemned to live non-inflammably. Yet the play boasts one delightful creation in a music-teacher named Mr. Chimney, who lives alone with a cat and never finishes a sentence: a gentle, muddled person irresistible for the things he tries and fails to say. There are still Mr. Chimneys about if they are looked for under the right stones, even in these dim days of the standard man. I think every family that is any good as a family has one of him up their sleeve, who gets asked to Sunday supper because his guileless futility is strangely comforting. Whether he is making a hash of some still-born story or simply peering beadily at his boots this Mr. Chimney is all our Mr. Chimneys, and for that the author and Mr. RICHARD GOOLDEN earn grateful praise.

Dad is a hearty, kind but ponderous, Mum a cheerful drudge whose faint stirrings towards Beauty crystallize in a neighbour with an invalid wife and most of the poets by heart. I must confess I found this man insufferably understanding. Mum and he are never able to do much about each other because they are constantly interrupted, which is doubtless true to life but dramatically rather dull. Dad is too dumb even to notice. As for Miriam, the daughter, she grows tired of walking out with an unsuccessful writer, and no sooner is she married off the rebound than his first novel is rapturously greeted by the critics. Others come and go in a hospitable house. Mr. MERRY can draw people; what he must do in his next play is to give them a good, strong electric shock and let us see what happens. The acting is hardly up to the high standard the Boltons has set itself. After Mr. GOOLDEN, Miss GWYNNE WHITBY and Mr. LLOYD PEARSON, as Mum and Dad, are the best. ERIC.

At the Ballet

ANGLO-POLISH BALLET
(SAVILLE)
INTERNATIONAL BALLET
(ADELPHI)

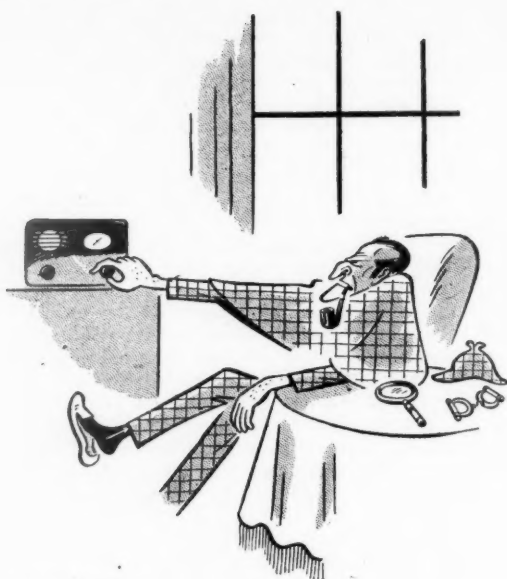
THE Anglo-Polish Ballet are at their best in folk-dancing in Polish national costume. *Cracow Wedding* is a gay and boisterous affair of this kind, and the bright-coloured peasant costumes, the flowered head-dresses of the principal characters, the village setting and the lively movement combine to make an enjoyable spectacle. *Matthew is Dead* is a short episode of the same kind, set in a Polish farmhouse kitchen. *Matthew*, lying a corpse, is brought back to life by the music of a fiddler and the happy event is celebrated with rustic galumphing round the kitchen—quite good fun in its way. The star dancer of the company is LODA HALAMA, who specializes in dramatic solos of the anguished variety. She depicts, for instance, a young nun torn between the conflicting desires for the delights of the world and the seclusion of the cloister—admirable sentiments laid on with a trowel. In the strongest possible contrast, HELENA WOLSKA represents the classics and gives a good performance as the *Swan Queen* in Act II of *Le Lac des Cygnes*. Miss NANA GOLLNER is yet another

of the *Swan Queens* who have alighted on the painted lakes that slumber under the painted moons of London theatres. This distinguished American ballerina has come to London as the guest of International Ballet, and ballet-lovers should not fail to pay homage to the *Swan Queen* as she depicts her. Her technique has an ease and fluency wonderful to behold. She is very slender and beautifully proportioned, and dances with a speed, brilliance and passion that make her *Swan Queen* extraordinarily vivid. In addition she manages to convey with real poignancy the dual nature of the *Swan Queen*, a passionate and loving woman on whom a spell has been laid of which she cannot free herself. When she first comes on to the stage—transformed for a few hours back into human form—she conveys instantly that her human soul has not yet awakened, and it is a frightened bird that flees from the Prince. Little by little the woman in her reawakens and when the *Sorcerer* appears she is completely a woman, terrified for the safety of the one she loves. The adagio with the Prince and Benno gives her a great opportunity which she does not miss—it is *Odette* who turns to the Prince, but a wounded bird who falls

into Benno's arms; and as the dawn approaches and the spell increases its hold upon her, it is a woman who is in anguish at the thought of parting from the Prince, but a bird that nestles against him. It is a beautiful performance. As *Odile* in the second act, dressed in a striking emerald green costume, she performs with effortless brilliance all the feats required of her. PAUL PETROFF dances the rôle of *Prince Siegfried*.

WILLIAM CHAPPELL has designed for this production some delightful sets and fifteenth-century costumes, and the general level of the dancing is a great improvement on this company's previous productions.

But the catalogue of *Swan Queens* is not exhausted, for still another, as yet unheralded, gave a private performance for the benefit of an audience of one. This ballerina wore a dress that was cloudy grey above and pea-soup-fog brown below; scorning tights, she wore her own short black stumps and golosh-like splay feet. The setting was by Father Thames, and the stage was beside Hammersmith Bridge. She was preening her feathers, and to say that her beauty and grace equalled NANA GOLLNER's is to pay a deserved compliment to both. D. C. B.



"Dick Barton! Tchab!"

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Eric Gill's Essays

It will be interesting to see whether Eric Gill was the last of the old "makers"—the men who work with skill and imagination at anything from poetry to pottery—or the first of the new. That, he would himself have said, depends on whether England becomes "poor and needy" in the common proletarian fashion or in the manner recommended by the Gospels. Of these polar options Gill chose the second; and lived his choice out with such thoroughness that the "integrity" of his life is the feature most stressed by reviewers of his autobiography. It is equally noticeable in the *Essays* (CAPE, 8/6), now reprinted in one volume. The 1942 series is mainly axiomatic. Work—responsible work—is a good thing. Personal possessions are good because they give us proprietary rights over ourselves, our tools and what we make. The 1944 series consists, for the most part, of impromptu pieces. These work out particular problems—such as the place, if any, of "Sculpture on Machine-Made Buildings"—or describe particular experiences—as "A Diary in Ireland" does. Very little of Gill is fugitive; for when he says "All Art is Propaganda," he means that everything we make is a buttress for Heaven or Hell—a point of view that, honestly and expertly uttered, makes for permanence.

H. P. E.

The Victorian Underworld

In *Fanny by Gaslight* Mr. MICHAEL SADLEIR treated the pleasures of the rich in mid-Victorian London. In *Forlorn Sunset* (CONSTABLE, 12/6) he is chiefly concerned with the underworld of procurers and other contributors to the

amusements of the well-to-do. Mr. SADLEIR is rather a scholar than a novelist. There cannot be much about vice in the London of seventy to eighty years ago that has escaped his tireless investigations; and he has even been at the pains to sketch the life of a down-and-out in New York during these years, and to give us a passing glimpse of the hazards attending the career of an American dealer in pornography. His lucid style and skilful presentation of his material make this book a valuable contribution to social history. Considered as a novel it is less satisfactory. Mr. SADLEIR does not possess the gift of making his characters live. Broadly speaking, any male person whose name begins with an S is a villain (Sneade, the Slodes, Slippery, Spelter, Snaith), and any male person whose name begins with an M is a good fellow (Matt Merton, Mervyn, Meadows, Merriek). There is, as this suggests, something curiously automatic about the author's method of characterization. Even Lottie, the central figure, does not come to life. As a young girl, hard, vindictive and sensual, she is convincing enough, but her later remorse culminating in a heroic death owes less to Mr. SADLEIR's knowledge of human nature than to his knowledge of Victorian fiction.

H. K.

Young Wisdom

Posthumously published books are always painful to review since any attempt at constructive criticism comes too sadly late; and indiscriminate praise can only be an insult to the memory of those young men who have died for us. In a preface (written, one suspects, by his father) to the late Mr. LEWIS MASEFIELD's novel *The Passion Left Behind* (FABER, 8/6) tribute is paid to the author's mind and character—"He was the most delightful, the wisest, and the best man whom I have known well." The book itself is very young and is written with a wise simplicity—almost as a far-seeing and clear-minded child might have written. This is a rare thing in a young book, and is very attractive. The story is about a youth who earns three pounds a week as Jack-of-all-trades in a publishing house. He is ordinary, conceited and pathetically petty, has ambitions which false pride prevents him from showing, and is fretted by jealousy. Mr. MASEFIELD has written most understandingly about him, his men friends and the girl who works in an Information bureau, but he does not allow them to understand one another. In his own writing he backs the belief of one of the heads of the publishing firm that "the English public was not sophisticated, did not like reading articles written with stylistic innovations. They wanted something simple which journalists rather than novelists could give them." He, though avoiding the journalist's ready-made slogans as well as grandiose introspections, caters for that taste. He was young—but old enough, also, to realize the needs and the pathos of youth: in that the strength of the book lies.

B. E. B.

Seizin of Sussex

The County Books, of which Mr. BRIAN VESEY-FITZGERALD is the obviously ideal editor, are happily inaugurated by Mrs. ESTHER MEYNELL's *Sussex* (HALE, 15/-). The depicting of a shire so well provided with admirers offers its own difficulties; but the author has taken her own line and pursued it with grace and good sense. She mitigates "pre-history"—always rather sticky going—by pleasantly irreverent accounts of pre-historians and their purveyors: from Dr. Mantell, whose discovery of a fossil iguanodon in the early nineteenth century evoked fourteen stanzas of

admiration from a Brighton citizen, to the cheerful gravel-diggers of Piltown who played football with the famous skull before cleaving it with a pick-axe. History disposed of up to the Conquest—when Norman William “took seizin of England” in two handfuls of Sussex mud—we have a well-deserved chapter on Lewes; and one apiece on coastal towns, villages, Sussex worthies, the Downs and the traditional life so fast disappearing before war, education and wireless. (There is a timely symbolism about the Mayfield farmer who objected to new roads, “for how can a wagon stand upright if it has no ruts to go in?”) Regency Brighton and Hastings, delightful in themselves and excellent foils to Rye and Winchelsea, are unaccountably omitted from an attractive series of photographs.

H. P. E.

An Artist's Eye

“Every time I look at nature there is another canvas covered in my mind,” says Mr. EDWARD SEAGO the painter, which explains the rather ambiguous title of his latest book *A Canvas to Cover* (COLLINS, 15/-). This discursive appreciation of nature's moods will appeal to those who have not merely patience but sympathy with an artist's temperament and will charm a far larger number for the sake of the illustrations, but it must be admitted that seldom has a more formless book come the reviewer's way. Mr. SEAGO invites us into his East Anglian studio (stacked with lovely canvases), and half-closing his eyes and stretching his hands before the fire—“I remember one summer afternoon . . .” he begins, and muses aloud, as only artists can, about the colour and forms of clouds, and how beautifully windmills “compose” in a landscape, and the joy that Constable, Crome and Cotman must have had in painting their sails outstretched against the sky. He talks of trees and hedgerows, of sunlight and shadow, and—glancing at one of his snowy landscapes—of the beauty of white in nature; and his suggestive remarks help us the better to appreciate a landscape painter's intention for the glimpses they allow us of nature seen through impressionable eyes. It is a pity that such revealing talk is interspersed with reminiscences which serve only to make some quite insignificant points. Constable, whose influence is apparent in a number of his paintings, is seldom long absent from the author's mind, and of him he says finely: “He wanted the wind to blow across his canvas; he wanted the sunlight to shine through his trees, and the rain to glisten on his grass; he wanted to capture the fresh air, and to let light and atmosphere into his pictures—and he did it.” It is a just tribute to the brilliant illustrations to say that Mr. SEAGO has done it too.

N. A. D. W.

Siberia

Books on Siberia, of which several have of late been published and many more may confidently be expected, are not startlingly dissimilar. They tend to be, like their subject, long and, on the whole, monotonous. Mr. EMIL LENGYEL, the author of *Secret Siberia* (ROBERT HALE, 15/-), a Hungarian by birth, was captured by the Russians in the first world-war, and sent to a prisoners' camp in Siberia. On the way there he saw a great deal of the country, and was agreeably impressed by its trees and flowers, its endless plains of waving grain, and great streams. “The country, we found, was a modern Canaan actually flowing with the best milk and honey we had ever tasted.” At that time, however, Siberia was comparatively neglected by the government. Revisiting it under Soviet rule, the author was amazed at the transformation which was taking place.

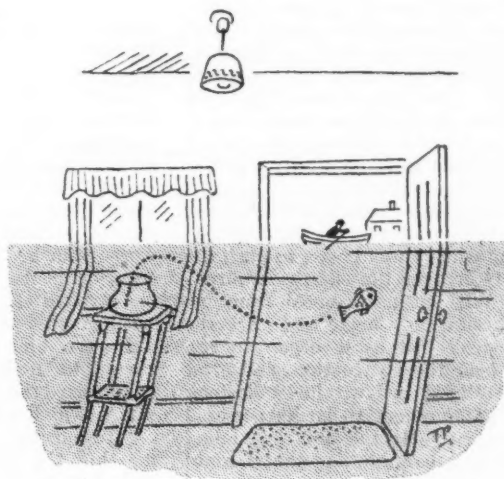
Siberia, he says, is now “a panorama of blast-furnaces and smelters, of hydro-electric power stations and transmission lines, of textile industries and shipbuilding yards, of metallurgical and chemical plants . . .” and so on. All this fills Mr. LENGYEL with enthusiasm, and he goes on to point out that an aggressive country with Siberia in its grasp could strike in every direction: “Soviet Asia controls key positions in relation to all the strategical fronts of the world, the only country on the globe having such an advantage.” The reader may close this book with a faint nostalgia for the days when Siberia was still “an inert mass.”

H. K.

Sharp Saws

Conversation in what is left of honest country is still often carried on in the verbal shorthand of proverbs. They not only lend talk a solid air of wisdom but many of them are the siftings of immemorial experience. Mr. W. S. MANSFIELD has done a good turn to the farmer and the literary countryman by collecting a number in *Farmer's Friend* (CAMBRIDGE, 6/-) and putting them to the test of modern scientific theory, an experiment for which, as the Director of the Cambridge University Farm, he is well qualified. In most he finds sound sense, though some obviously need modification; “The master's foot is the best manure,” for instance, must now be altered in the case of the great arable farm to “The master's jeep . . .” But it is sad to learn that science admits no foundation for the ancient and picturesque belief, far older than Rudolf Steiner, in the mystic influence of the moon on agriculture, and that “Sow peas and beans in the wane of the moon, Who soweth them sooner he soweth too soon,” is on the nonsense list. With “One year's seeding, seven years' weeding,” none will disagree, and war experience of ploughing-up has proved the truth of “Copper under heather, silver under gorse, gold under bracken.” As a kind of melancholy comic strip Mr. MANSFIELD runs a series of weather saws on which wisely he makes no pronouncement, but one which has his backing and is worth remembering is “Long foretold, long past, short notice, soon past.” If farmers ever read in bed, this is their book, for under its sugar lies a regular horse-pill of instruction. Four nice drawings by Mr. JOHN HOOKHAM go with it, and a witty preface by Mr. FRANK KENDON in defence of fools.

E. O. D. K.





"Did you ring, ducks?"

Back at the Wheel

VII—Entrusting It

MR. WHISTLETON was sent to me some weeks ago by what I decided at the time was some mysterious agency for good. It was at a point in my renaissance as a motorist when I had been much saddened by the attitude of established garages and their employees, by their indifference, their incompetence and their scales of charges. Standing brazenly beneath their great painted notice-boards boasting comprehensive succour for cars of all kinds they had repeatedly sent the Good Goer empty away.

I found Mr. Whistleton loitering round the garages under the flats one evening when I was trying to push the Good Goer over the sliding-door runway. Without any appeal from me he unhesitatingly came and gave the car a push just as it began to run easily over the obstruction, and after a mere word or two he undertook from that moment to be its personal manservant. He told me that I had picked up a bargain, and that I could get a very high price any time I

wanted to sell. What a change, this, from the barely-concealed sniggers of greasy-faced boys and the uncompromising monosyllables of their be-spannered elders! Unlike "Smiling Services," "Happy Motors" and other frankly defeatist enterprises, Mr. Whistleton was not in the least dismayed when I recited the familiar catalogue of the Good Goer's infirmities. He nodded with refreshing confidence at each item, giving the car an occasional professional pat. "I'll easy fix that," he said when I told him of the obstructionism I had encountered over the hand-brake. "Don't you worry your head," he said, "about the door-lock. As for the petrol-feed"—he stroked the blistered bonnet—"I'll easy fix that."

I gave him ten shillings straight away, to make sure of him, and emphasized that Operation Hand-brake was the high priority job.

"To-morrow night," he said, helping me shut the sliding-door just after I had shut it—"without fail."

It was actually three evenings later that he rang the bell of my flat. Mildly, for it pays to be mild in these matters, I said that I had expected him on the Tuesday.

"Would you like to come down and take a look?" he said, and I did not pursue the matter. It was a trifle, after all, compared with a hand-brake that could actually be moved on and off.

Down in the courtyard he walked over to the car and switched the lights on.

"All right, isn't it?" he said.

"Splendid."

"The other one was loose."

"The other what?"

"Do you mean to say you hadn't noticed?" he said. "Why, it was hangin' by a thread, that old off-side headlamp was. First thing I spotted."

I thanked him very much for spotting it. In my careless way I had quite overlooked it. I thanked him again, and money changed hands before I thought it opportune to ask about the hand-brake.

"I've got you a door-lock," he said.
"Oh, well. Thank you very much indeed."

"To-morrow night," he said. "I'll easy fix that."

It seemed ungrateful to press the matter of the hand-brake, though when over a week went by without seeing him it did occur to me that the waiting period was a little expensive, with taxation and insurance and garage-fees silently trickling out of the Good Goer's back wheels.

On the following Sunday morning he got me out of bed at a quarter past eight.

"Been working on her over two hours," he said, in oblique criticism of my night-clothes. "Care to come down and have a look?"

Ten minutes later I found him standing proudly at the open garage door.

"You just stand there," he directed, arranging me so that I was looking through the Good Goer's back window. Then he went round to the front of the car and presently I saw that the window-blind was descending in a series of irregular jerks.

"See?" called Mr. Whistleton.

"Fine," I said. "Didn't it work before?" (I asked out of honest ignorance.)

"Now watch," answered the man. "Ready?"

There was a whirr and the blind disappeared. As I passed into the garage to congratulate him I noticed that it was lying on the back seat.

"You couldn't never have drove at night," he said. "I've had to re-do the cord right through."

"Thank you," I said. "Did you fix the door-lock?"

"It has to pass through all these eyelets, see?"—he had opened the driver's door and was pointing at something invisible in the interior gloom—"and you operate it with a ring on the end."

"I see," I said.

He emerged, flushed from the strain. "I'm going to put you a ring on the end," he said.

"Look," I began, "I don't want you to think—"

"Very unobtainable, those blinds," he said. "Lucky I happened to have a len'th of cord for re-doing it. Pre-war piece it was. Took every scrap I'd got."

"How much?" I asked, expecting the answer in feet.

"Say twelve-and-six. And I tell you what."

"What?"

He gave me a fatherly double pat on the arm.

"You don't want to spend a lot of money on this car."

"I certainly don't," I said. "But you told me it was worth—"

"I'm coming to fix that petrol-feed, Wednesday without fail," he broke in. "You didn't think I'd forgotten, did you?"

"Well—"

"But you'll be wanting your breakfast," he said, suddenly considerate. "See you Wednesday."

On Friday evening I went down to the garage for the third night running. It had occurred to me, thinking things over, that for all his easy assurance and optimism Mr. Whistleton might like a word of encouragement while he worked. This time he was there, and I was only faintly surprised to find him in a stooping position at the wrong end of the car. Even I know the approximate situation of the petrol-feed. He straightened his back with a grunt at the sound of my footstep and said "Well, mister, that's fixed that."

"Good," I said.

He gave a little snort, seeing through me.

"Mean to say you never noticed? Back number-plate buckled over near double." His voice dropped to a whisper. "Marvel they haven't had you."

"Who?"

"Sh! The police. Cost you a couple of quid if they had."

"What about the petrol-feed?" I asked, almost rudely.

"It's new plugs you want."

"Why?"

"Engine wants re-boring, see. New gaskets, really."

"But the petrol-feed—"

"See," said Mr. Whistleton, with the air of a grown-up explaining to an interested child, "new plugs might burn out your old points."

"But—"

"It's the timing, see. Corroded terminals on the battery."

"Did you—?"

"Really wants de-carbonizing, do the job properly."

"I don't want to—"

"Now, I'll tell you what I'm going to do," he said. "Are you going to be in to-morrow night?"

"I can be. But—"

"I can bring you a good re-tread for that back wheel. Plenty of meat on it. Fifty shillings."

"What about the hand-brake?" I said grimly.

"That head-lamp I put you on, now"—he went round to the bonnet—"got a bit of red glass in it, see? Tell whether it's on."

"Can you fix the door-lock or can't you?"

"Some people," he said, "have to get out of the car every time, see whether the lights have come on or not. There's only one thing about the tyre, if I can still get it. . . . I shall have to give the chap cash, see?"

Of course, I was a fool to part with the money. My only consolation is that even if the tyre had arrived (which it never did, and neither did he) it would probably have turned out to be a new windscreen after all.

(To be more careful.)

J. B. B.

Memo. to M.C.

DEAR MR. STEERS,—There has been some bother flung back on the councils' heads following the wedding party you held in the borough restaurant. It seems most of this was connected with the microphone being connected with the public room and the customers thinking your directions to your guests were a government crisis. Your call for the younger people to go to the bottom of the table and the older ones vice versa, coming as it did at the peak Saturday football tea-turn-out, got a mad rush of the younger end at the warmer end with the trays they had been sent to fill for the older end, who were shivering foodless at the other end. The latter added to the confusion by going to our harassed counter hands complaining about missing meals and mites all in the same breath, so that before the evening was through we had seven representatives of the Missing Persons' Bureau with aprons on behind the bar and an equal number of trained assistants with aprons off behind the bars.

It has taken weeks for the repercussions to be counted, and we are still getting children returned to us by members of your party who have palmed themselves on to them by false apprehension of your broadcast instructions as to whose nephews and nieces were to stay with which second cousins. How these bairns strayed into your party after disposing of their own trays can only be put down to their respect for loudspeaker announcements. As you insisted on having your own microphone engineer to save cost, and we accepted in good faith as he was to recondition it free, Mr. Tingle's department thinks we were in the clear in passing these on to you out of court as a case of radio kidnapping.

J. TINGLE, Catering Solicitor.

To Take My Own Case . . .

"DO you mean to tell me," I demanded, "that just because I can't lay my hand on a fiddling bit of paper which your railway company might have invented for the sole purpose of being easily lost, I am therefore debarred from ever using my own suitcase again?"

"That's just about the size of it," said the man.

"Even if I can satisfy you that I know what's in it?"

"Well, of course," he conceded, "if you was *really* to satisfy me."

"All right. There's a book in it, for one thing."

The man shuffled across to the case I had indicated.

"And what might the book be called?" he asked.

In all my imaginative rehearsals of the scene this has been the big moment. "And what might the book be called?" asks the man. "The book," say I, in a hesitant, half-deprecating sort of way, "might be called *Die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*, by Wilamowitz-Moellendorf." At this a great murmur of admiration goes round the crowd waiting behind me ("A scholar, Edith; didn't I say as much?" "What a brow, folks, what a brow!"), which rises to a cheer as the man holds the glittering tome aloft; then with a delicate tribute to my judgment he hands the case over to me, and the eyes of all follow me as I make my embarrassed escape. But, alas! it could not be so now. Here was the crowd, here was the man and here the case; but for once, I knew, I had left the dear old *Geschichte* at home.

"The book," said I, in a hesitant,

half-deprecating sort of way, "might be called *The Corpses at No. 10 Downing Street*."

He looked inside the case.

"I'm sorry to tell you," said he, "that there's no book of that name here."

I cursed myself. It was bad enough to have omitted the *Geschichte*; but to have even omitted *The Corpses*—that was unpardonable.

"Oh, dear!" I said, "I must have forgotten to pack it."

"Yes," said he, in the tone that Hardy uses when he shakes his head at Laurel, "you must have forgotten to pack it."

"Well, there's a razor there anyway," said I.

"No, there's not a razor here," said the man.

The crowd now began to take a hand.

"'Appen 'e's growin' a beard," suggested a man behind me.

"Fugitive from justice, I shouldn't wonder," a friend agreed.

"Then there's a tooth-brush," said I.

"Then there's not a tooth-brush," said the man.

"It's probably the new idea, not to 'ave one," said the man behind me.

"Leave it to nature, like," amplified the friend.

"You're not going to tell me there aren't even any pyjamas there," said I.

"I'm going to tell you there's nothing that looks like a pyjama here," said the man.

"'E knew they weren't likely to ask 'im to stay the night," said the man behind me.

"Not after what 'appened last time," the friend darkly added.

I gazed in bewilderment at the case, and as I did so enlightenment in its full horror broke upon me. It was my case right enough; it was the case I had brought with me and the case I had deposited; but it was not, I suddenly remembered, the case I had actually packed. And with this realization my last reserve of courage left me; I gave one cry which none that heard me will ever forget, and the eyes of all followed me as I made my embarrassed escape.

But I am not beaten so easily as that. The next day I attempted the journey again with the other case, duly packed with razor, tooth-brush, pyjamas and *Die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*; and some twenty-four hours after the disaster related above I went round to rescue it from the left luggage office where it had spent the lunch hour.

"Ticket, please," said the man; then as he caught sight of my face, "*if you have one*," he added in a voice charged with meaning.

I plunged and fumbled madly.

I hadn't.

M. H. L.

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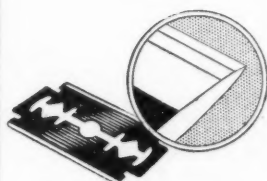
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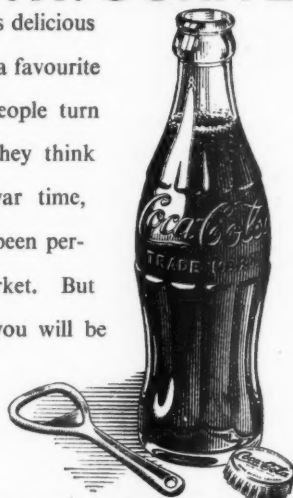
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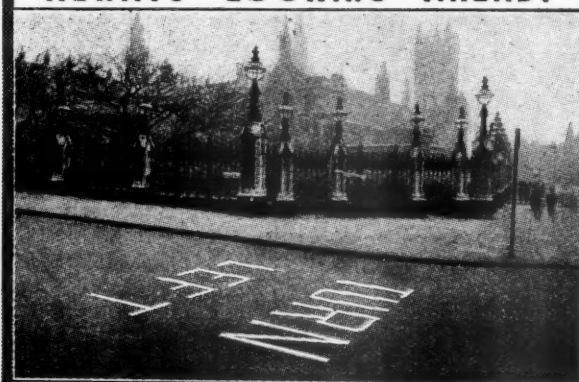
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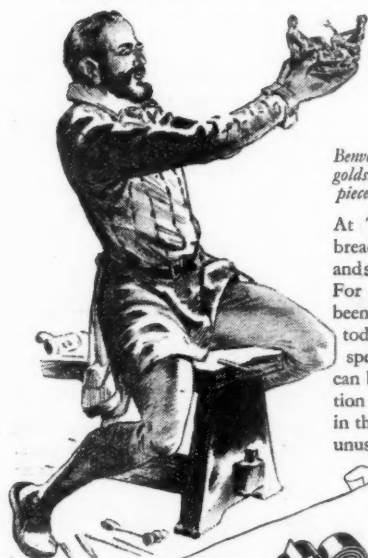
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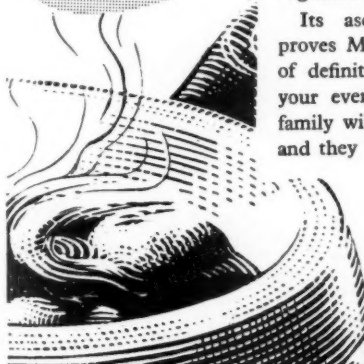


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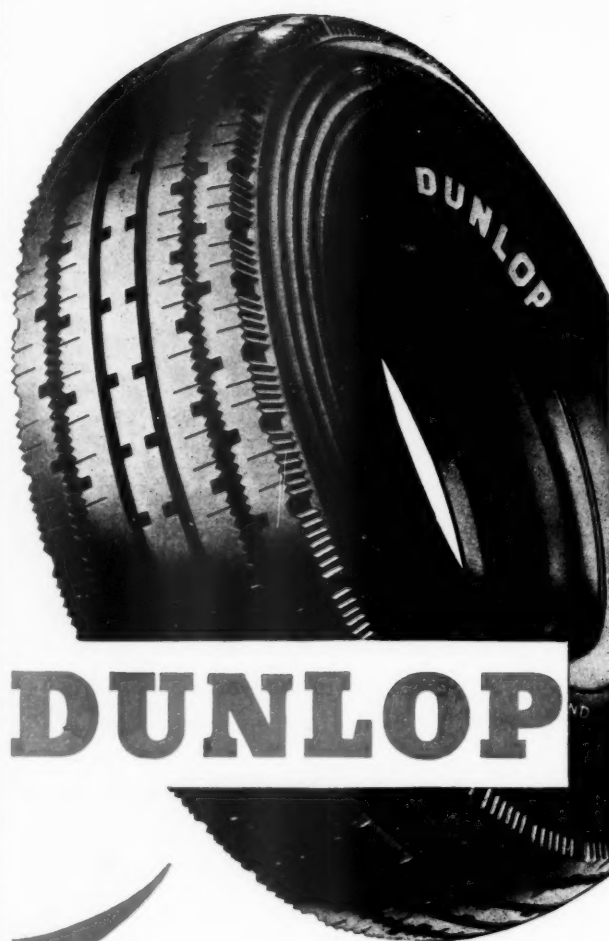
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